

Message Text

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PAGE 01 WELLIN 03027 140447Z

17

ACTION IO-10

INFO OCT-01 EA-09 ISO-00 AGR-10 AID-05 EB-07 COME-00

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FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 321

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY ROME

UNCLAS WELLINGTON 3027

ROME FOR FODAG

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: FAO, NZ

SUBJ: GNZ REQUESTS US SUPPORT FOR ERIC OJALA AS

NEXT FAO DIR. GEN.

REF: WELLINGTON'S 2985

1. THE EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED A DIPLOMATIC NOTE DATED OCTOBER 8 FROM THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (MFA) REQUESTING THE EMBASSY TO INFORM USG THAT GNZ IS SPONSORING THE CANDIDATURE OF DR. ERIC OJALA, A NEW ZEALANDER FOR FAO DIRECTOR GENERAL AT THE 18TH FAO CONFERENCE STARTING NOVEMBER 8, 1975.

2. NOTE SAYS MFA "WOULD BE GRATEFUL FOR THE SUPPORT" OF USG FOR OJALA, "OR, IF THIS IS NOT POSSIBLE BECAUSE OF A COMMITMENT ALREADY GIVEN TO ANOTHE CANDIDATE, FOR SUPPORT IN THE SECOND AND ANY SUBSEQUENT BALLOTS".

3. NOTE ALSO MAKES FOLLOWING POINTS:

(A) DR. OJALA IS MOST EXPERIENCED IN FAO AFFAIRS OF ALL DG CANDIDATES; 6 YEARS AS REGIONAL ECONOMIST AT THE JOINT ESCAP/FAO
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PAGE 02 WELLIN 03027 140447Z

OFFICE IN BANGKOK AND 13 YEARS AT FAO

HEADQUARTERS RISING TO ASST. D.G.

(B) OJALA IS A PRACTICAL RURAL ECONOMIST AND PROVEN ADMINISTRATOR, HIGHLY RESPECTED BY ALL LEVELS OF FAO STAFF.

(C) OJALA PROPOSES TO REVITALIZE THE FAO MAKING IT MORE ORIENTED TOWARD DEVELOPMENT AND INVESTMENT. HE HAS SET OUT HIS PROPOSALS IN AN INTERESTING POLICY STATEMENT. HIS EARLIER EXPERIENCE HAS EQUIPPED HIM WELL FOR THIS.

(D) HE COMES FROM COUNTRY EXPERIENCED IN FOOD PRODUCTION AND AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT.

(E) NO NEW ZEALANDER HAS PREVIOUSLY HELD THE TOP EXECUTIVE POSITION IN ONE OF THE UN SPECIALIZED AGENCIES. (IT WOULD BE APPROPRIATE FOR THIS COUNTRY'S FIRST APPOINTMENT TO BE THE POSITILN OF DIRECTOR GENERAL OF FAO".

4. EMBASSY IS UNABLE TO COMMENT ON DR. OJALA'S QUALIFICATILNS OR THE APPROPRIATENESS OF HIS APPOINTMENT FOR THE POST. HOWEVER, UNLESS THERE ARE IMPORTANT REASONS WHY THE USG CANNOT SUPPORT HIS CANDIDACY, FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF US/NZ RELATIONS, ESPECIALLY IN THE AGRICULTURAL AREA, EMBASSY WOULD SUGGEST WE BE AS POSITIVE AND FORTH-COMING AS POSSIBLE IN SUPPORT FOR DR. OJALA.

5. A COPY OF THE NOTE AND DR. OJALA'S CURRICULUM VITAE WHICH WAS ATTACHED IS BEING TRANSMITTED VIA THE NEXT AIR POUCH.
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